NCSL’s Redistricting and Elections Task Force
Minutes, August 13, 2013

Attending: 40 people, including legislators, legislative staff, NCSL staff, and other interested parties.

Co-chairs Senator Ray Holmberg, Delegate Jon Cardin and staff chair Debra Levine welcomed the group. NCSL staff Morgan Cullen and Wendy Underhill were introduced, and can be reached at Morgan Cullen or Wendy Underhill at 303-364-7700.

The following questions were discussed at tables of 4 to 6 people:

- What would you like to get from the task force, and what expertise can you offer?
- What are the redistricting and elections issues you’d recommend the task force address?
- When would you like the task force to meet, and how would you like meetings to be structured?
- Since travel is hard, what kinds of long distance communication or collaboration work for you?

In reporting out from these small groups, the following major projects were proposed:

- revitalizing NCSL’s database of redistricting litigation
- updating NCSL’s webpages devoted to redistricting
- beginning work on the “red book” on redistricting, possibly putting it online
- sponsoring a webinar on online voter registration for early November
- developing work on a clearinghouse of elections-related reports

NOTE: volunteer advisors from the task force are welcome on all of these

Suggestions for future topics included:

- continue to work with the U.S. Census Bureau—especially finding out how our members can get on their advisory committees, and how to have input on the ethnicity/race question prior to its adoption.
- continue with updates on redistricting litigation
- provide “Intro to Redistricting” sessions for those who are new to the subject
- continue to share methods and technologies (including software) for redistricting
- more “political science” on redistricting, such as the Stephanopoulos session
- discuss counting prisoners for redistricting purposes
- hear from the U.S. Department of Justice regarding the Voting Rights Act, and share any state-level voting rights initiatives
- address “moving election procedures into the 21st century.” This could include no-excuse absentee voting, early voting, and voting by mail/email/Internet, or modifying antiquated laws and prosecution and investigation of election fraud
- explore the cost of elections—who bears the cost and how much do we pay?
- focus on expanded technology for voting registration and election administration
- provide ideas on how states can educate/communicate with voters
- more on campaign finance

NOTE: if you might be able to serve as a presenter on any of these, or if you know someone who might be good, please let Morgan or Wendy know.